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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/646,187	08/22/2003	Louis A. Rhodes	706441US4	9081

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Donald J. Wallace
DaimlerChrysler Intellectual Capital Corporation
CIMS 483-02-19
800 Chrysler Drive
Auburn Hills, MI 48326-2757

EXAMINER

BROWN, PETER R

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3636

DATE MAILED: 04/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/646,187

Applicant(s)

RHODES ET AL.

Examiner

Peter R. Brown

Art Unit

3636

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5-8 and 12-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4, 9-11, 18 and 19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: ____.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1,2,5,7,8,12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Spindler.

Figures 1,2 and 4 show structure as claimed, including a stowable seat that is mounted for selective movement between an upright deployed position (fig. 1), an intermediate position (fig. 4) and a stowed position (fig. 2). Note that the back 2 is foldable over the seat cushion, and the leg 7 extends perpendicular to the seat in both the deployed and the intermediate positions. A second leg 6 is also provided and moves between a position perpendicular to the seat in the deployed position, and parallel to the seat in the stowed position.

In regards to claim 5, note spring 9.

Regarding claims 12 and 14, the back of Spindler folds towards the recess to a position parallel to the recess.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 3,13 and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Spindler in view of Cannera et al.

To have provided a cover for the recess of Spindler, for aesthetic and safety purposes, would have been an obvious modification to one with ordinary skill in the art, as such is shown to be conventional by Cannera et al (figs. 1,4).

In regards to claim 13, the direction that the back folds is considered a matter of design choice, depending upon the orientation and position of the seat.

Regarding claims 15-17, the use of the stowable seat of Spindler would appear to encompass the method steps as set forth.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Spindler in view of Feng.

To have provided the stowable seat of Spindler with a damping device to control the movement to the stowed position, would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art, as such is shown to be conventional by Feng (fig. 3). The location of the damping device is considered a matter of design choice.

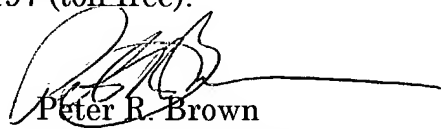
Claims 4,9-11,18 and 19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Ban et al, Reichel, Plavetich, Sugiura et al, and Kamida et al show various features of the invention.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Peter R. Brown whose telephone number is 703-308-2103. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Peter R. Brown
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3636

prb